

Types of Characters and Character Traits

from “Nadia the Willful”

by Sue Alexander

Nadia, too, did as her father decreed, though each day held something to remind her of Hamed. As she passed her brothers at play, she remembered games Hamed had taught her. As she walked by the women weaving patches for the tents and heard them talking and laughing, she remembered tales Hamed had told her and how they had made her laugh. . . .

Each memory brought Hamed’s name to Nadia’s lips, but she stilled the sound. And each time that she did so, her unhappiness grew until, finally, she could no longer contain it. She wept and raged at anyone and anything that crossed her path. Soon everyone at the oasis fled at her approach. And she was more lonely than she had ever been before.

One day, as Nadia passed the place where her brothers were playing, she stopped to watch them. They were playing one of the games that Hamed had taught her. But they were playing it wrong.

Without thinking, Nadia called out to them. “That is not the way! Hamed said that first you jump this way and then you jump back!”

Her brothers stopped their game and looked around in fear. Had Tarik heard Nadia say Hamed’s name? But the sheik was nowhere to be seen.

“Teach us, Nadia, as our brother taught you,” said her smallest brother.

And so she did. Then she told them of other games and how Hamed had taught her to play them. And as she spoke of Hamed, she felt an easing of the hurt within her.

So she went on speaking of him. . . .

At first the women were afraid to listen to the willful girl and covered their ears, but after a time, they listened and laughed with her.

“Remember your father’s promise of punishment!” Nadia’s mother warned when she heard Nadia speaking of Hamed. “Cease, I implore you!”